ISSN 0712-7774

DEAR MR. ZIVKOVIK

30 October 01

Nicholas C. Zivkovic,
181 Constitution Drive,
Bloomingdale, IL.
60108

I'm not sure if I ever wrote back to you about the comic strip samples that you sent me for comment back in 1993. The strip was called "Kilhook". By 1993 I was handling a fair number of submissions with a series of form letters but I was also writing a number of personal letters.

The reason that I am writing to you now is that I hung onto the strips at the time because—although the artwork was amateurish, certainly too amateurish for a newspaper syndicate (even assuming that they might have an interest in historical fantasy)—the writing had just the right note of authenticity in the dialogue for a Dark Ages battle scene. Knowing that I had a Dark Ages battle scene coming up in CEREBUS (a hundred or so issues down the road), I put your samples in with my "way off up ahead" file of reference material. Having arrived at "way off up ahead", I pulled your samples out to reread for the first time in eight years. And realized—pretty much right away—that I couldn't improve on what you had written. So I just extracted those lines which most impressed me and best suited the tone I was looking for—and then whittled them down from there (I wish I had had more pages to work with, but that proved not to be the case).

Anyway, I am enclosing a cheque for $100 US—which I hope will cover my unauthorized use of your material.

Please notify us of your current whereabouts (I suspect the Constitution Drive address is your parents' home since the telephone listing is under another name) so we can send you copies of the issue when it comes out (issue 274) with this letter on the inside front cover. And let us know if you move, so we can send royalty cheques to you each time we do another printing of LATTER DAYS.

Thank you for your assistance— eight years later on.

Sincerely,

Dave Sim

P.S. I've included all of the tracing paper drawings which were used in producing the sequence. I'd write "Enjoy!" but I just *HATE* it when people say "Enjoy"!"

CEREBUS
NO. 274 JANUARY 2002

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Creator, Writer
Characters/
pencil & ink,
mechanical tones,
lettering

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Background
Artist/pencil & ink

CHRIS VERHOEVEN
Cover Technician

KEN SIM
Cover Photos

LATTER DAYS

•

PROLOGUE
(Cerebus 266
and 267)

•

BOOK ONE
(Cerebus 268 to
288)

•

BOOK TWO
(Cerebus 289 to
300)

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DAVE SIM AND GERHARD

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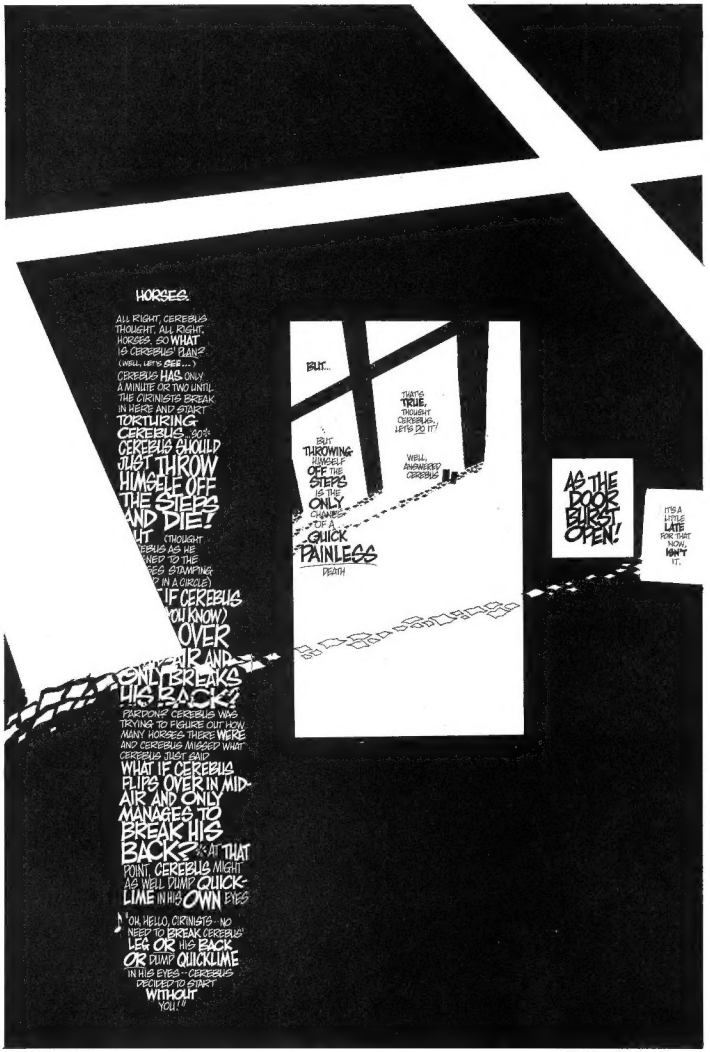
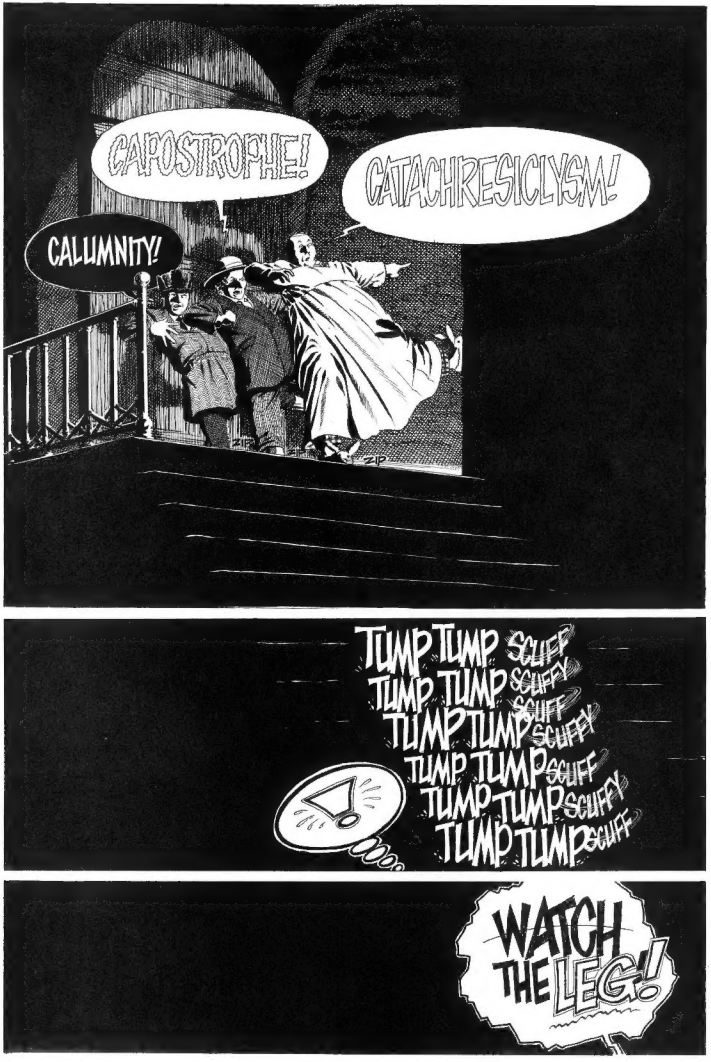
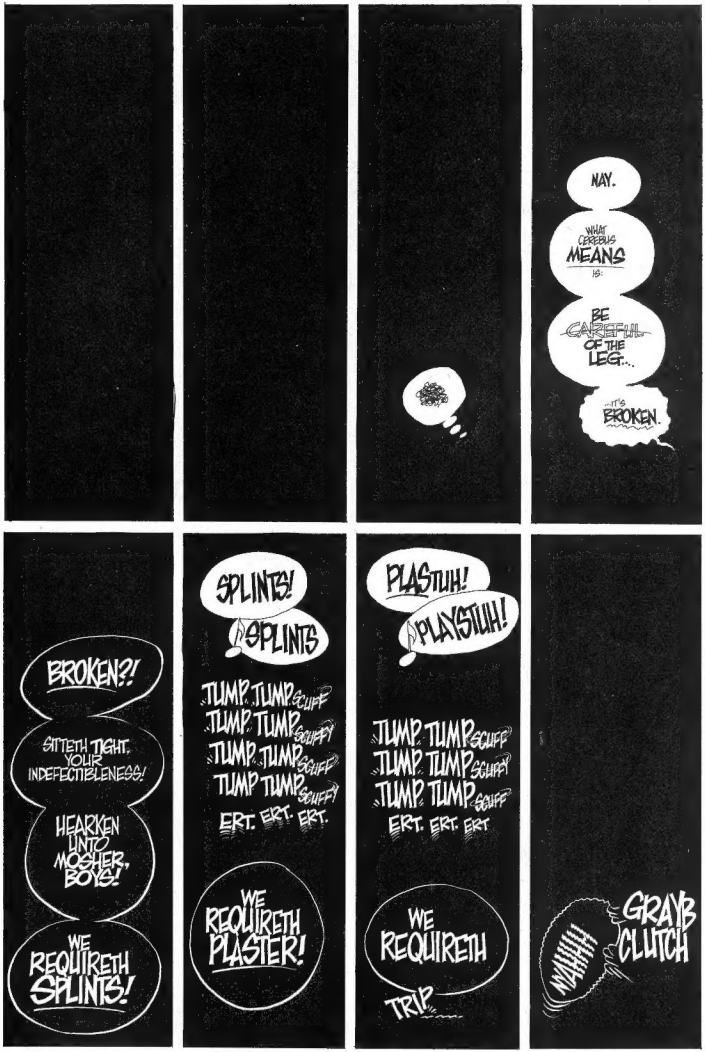
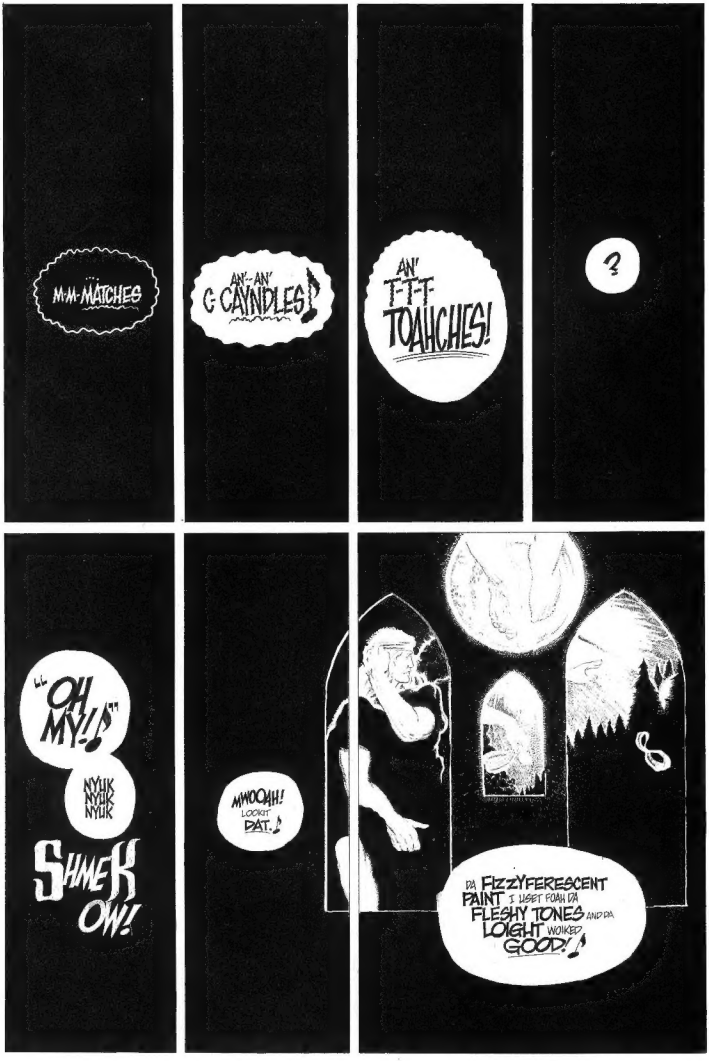
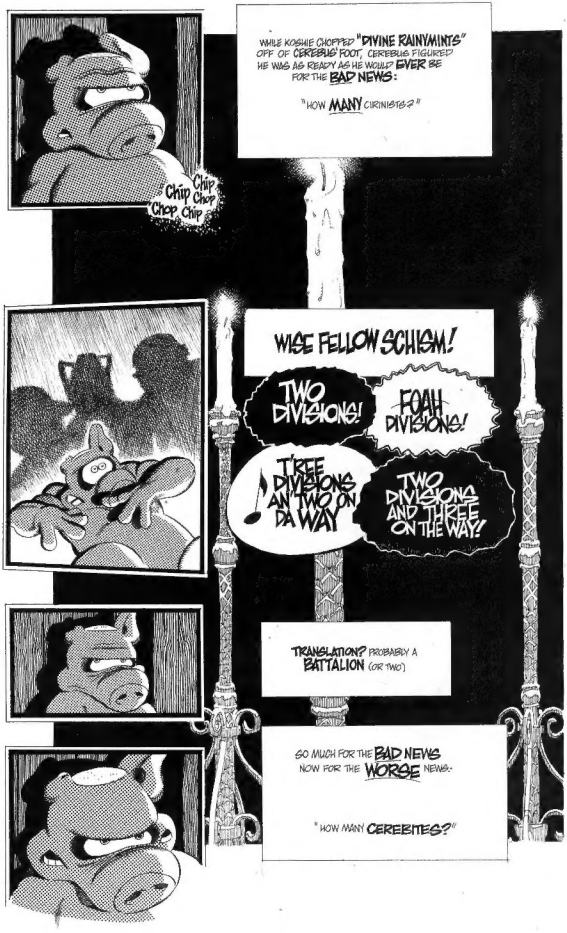

HORSES.
ALL RIGHT, CEREBUS THOUGHT. ALL RIGHT. HORSES. SO WHAT IS CEREBUS' PLAN? (WELL, LET'S SEE...)
CEREBUS HAS ONLY A MINUTE OR TWO UNTIL THE CITIZENS BREAK IN HERE AND START TORTURING CEREBUS. SO: CEREBUS SHOULD JUST THROW HIMSELF OFF THE STEPS AND DIE?
UH (THOUGHT CEREBUS AS HE NEED TO THE STEPS STARTING TO IN A CIRCLE)
IF CEREBUS (YOU KNOW)
OVER AIR AND ONLY BREAKS HIS BACK?
FORTUNATELY CEREBUS WAS TRYING TO FIGURE OUT HOW MANY HORSES THERE WERE AND CEREBUS MISSED WHAT CEREBUS JUST SAID.
WHAT IF CEREBUS FLIPS OVER IN MID-AIR AND ONLY MANAGES TO BREAK HIS BACK? AT THAT POINT, CEREBUS MIGHT AS WELL PUMP QUICK-LIME IN HIS OWN EYES
♪ "OH, HELLO, CITIZENS - NO NEED TO BREAK CEREBUS' LEG OR HIS BACK OR PUMP QUICKLIME IN HIS EYES - CEREBUS DECIDED TO START WITHOUT YOU! ♪
BUT...
THAT'S TRUE. THOUGHT CEREBUS. LET'S DO IT!
BUT THROWING HIMSELF OFF THE STEPS IS THE ONLY CHANCE OF A QUICK PAINLESS DEATH
WELL, ANSWERED CEREBUS
AS THE DOOR BURST OPEN!
IT'S A LITTLE LATE FOR THAT NOW, ISN'T IT.

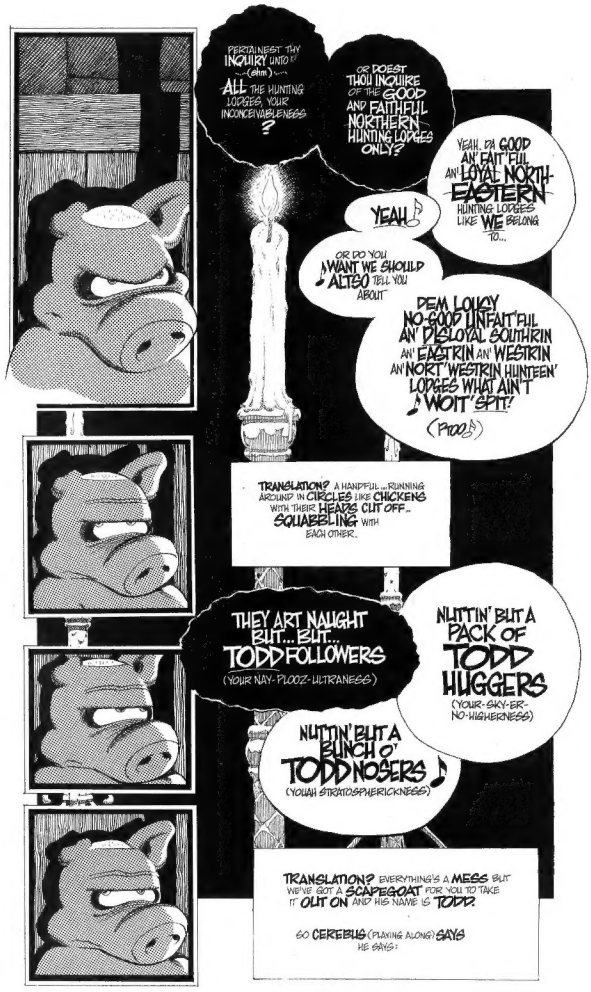

CAPOSTROPHE!
CATACHRESICLYSM!
CALUMNITY!
ZIP
TUMP TUMP SCUFF
TUMP TUMP SCUFF
TUMP TUMP SCUFF
TUMP TUMP SCUFF
TUMP TUMP SCUFF
TUMP TUMP SCUFF
TUMP TUMP SCUFF
WATCH THE LEG!


NAY.
WHAT CERBERUS MEANS IS:
BE CAREFUL OF THE LEG...
...IT'S BROKEN.
BROKEN?!
SITTETH TIGHT, YOUR INDEFECTIBLENESS!
HEARKEN UNTO MOSHER, BOYS!
WE REQUIRETH SPLINTS!
SPLINTS!
SPLINTS
TUMP. TUMP. SCUFF
TUMP. TUMP. SCUFF
TUMP. TUMP. SCUFF
TUMP TUMP SCUFF
ERT. ERT. ERT.
WE REQUIRETH PLASTER!
PLASTUH!
PLAYSTUH!
TUMP. TUMP. SCUFF
TUMP. TUMP. SCUFF
TUMP. TUMP. SCUFF
ERT. ERT. ERT
WE REQUIRETH
TRIP...
GRAB
CLUTCH


M-M-MATCHES
AN'-AN' C CAYNDLES!
AN' T-T-T TOAHCHES!
?
"OH MY!"
NYUK NYUK NYUK
SHMEK OW!
MWOOHH! LOOK AT DAT.
DA FIZZYFERESCENT PAINT I USET FOAH DA FLESHY TONES AND DA LOIGHT WOIKED GOOD!

THE BEST THING ABOUT LIVING AS LONG AS CERBERUS HAS IS ALL THE NEW INVENTIONS YOU GET TO SEE
LIKE: USING PLASTER TO SET A BROKEN BONE.
SOME BODY SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT OF THAT ONE YEARS AGO.
NyanaNEEEE♪
:PLAP: :PLAP: :PLAP:
AHOY, PARMESAN. WHEREFORE DOEST THOU GRAFT UPON HIS CREST A WINGED VIPER?
MMWOAHH!♪ DAT AIN'T NO WINGED VIPER. DAT DERE IS "DEE-VOIN RAINYMINTS"... SHE WHAT IS SPOKEN ABOUT IN RICK 5:8♪
SHE SIGNIFRIES DAT GOD'S WISDOM IS ROYEEN TO CERBERETICAL HOYES WIT'IN OF GREAT CERBERUS♪
(AW A NICE PIECE O' SCRIPTURE SHE IS, TOO♪ IF I DO SAY SO MESELF... NYUK NYUK NYUK)
IZZAT SO?
IT SEEMETH UNTO MOSHER THAT WHAT SHE 'SIGNIFRIES' IS KOSHER'S THEOLOGY DESCENDEGRATING UNTO THE LEVEL OF HIS GROIN AGAIN!
OH, YEAH?♪ AN WHAT DO YOU MEAN BOY DAT♪ EX"ZACK"?
PUTTEST THOU SOME CLOTHES ON HER OR PUHFOAM A "DEE-VOIN RAINYMINTS" -ECTOMY...
...NOW!
OW SUMEB
FILLA-STEEM.


WHILE KOSHIE CHOPPED "DIVINE RAINYMINTS" OFF OF CEREBELLS' FOOT, CEREBELLS FIGURED HE WAS AS READY AS HE WOULD EVER BE FOR THE BAD NEWS:
"HOW MANY CURINISTES?"
Chip Chop Chip Chop Chip
WISE FELLOW SCHISM!
TWO DIVISIONS!
FOAH DIVISIONS!
THREE DIVISIONS AN' TWO ON DA WAY
TWO DIVISIONS AND THREE ON THE WAY!
TRANSLATION? PROBABLY A BATTALION (OR TWO)
SO MUCH FOR THE BAD NEWS NOW FOR THE WORSE NEWS.
"HOW MANY CEREBITES?"


PERZACNEEST THY INQUIRY UNTO T' —(ehm)—... ALL THE HUNTING LODGES, YOUR INCONCEIVABLENESS ?
OR DOEST THOU INQUIRE OF THE GOOD AND FAITHFUL NORTHERN HUNTING LODGES ONLY?
YEAH, DA GOOD AN' FAIT'FUL AN' LOYAL NORTH-EASTERN HUNTING LODGES LIKE WE BELONG TO...
YEAH
OR DO YOU WANT WE SHOULD ALTSO TELL YOU ABOUT
DEM LOUSY NO-GOOD UNFAIT'FUL AN' DISLOYAL SOUTHRIN AN' EASTRIN AN' WESTRIN AN' NORT'WESTRIN HUNTEEN' LODGES WHAT AIN'T WOIT' SPIT!
(PTOOEY)
TRANSLATION? A HANDFUL ...RUNNING AROUND IN CIRCLES LIKE CHICKENS WITH THEIR HEADS CUT OFF.. SQUABBLING WITH EACH OTHER.
THEY ART NAUGHT BUT... BUT... TODD FOLLOWERS
(YOUR NAY-PLOOZ-ULTRANESS)
NUTTIN' BUT A PACK OF TODD HUGGERS
(YOUR-SKY-ER-NO-HIGHERNESS)
NUTTIN' BUT A BUNCH O' TODD NOSERS
(YOWAH STRATOSPHERICKNESS)
TRANSLATION? EVERYTHING'S A MESS BUT WE'VE GOT A SCAPEGOAT FOR YOU TO TAKE IT OUT ON AND HIS NAME IS TODD.
SO CEREBUS (PLAYING ALONG) SAYS HE SAYS:

WHERE. IS. THIS..
TODD
(REAL SNARLY LIKE THAT)
FIGURING WHEREEVER TODD WAS IT HAD TO BE SOMEPLACE REASONABLY SAFE (THAT IS A MOLTEN-LEAD-ENEMA-FREE-ZONE) OR THEY WOULD'VE BROUGHT TODD -- AND THE REST OF THE CERBERITES -- WITH THEM.
(AND WHEREEVER THAT TURNED OUT TO BE -- CERBERUS FIGURED IT HAD TO BE A WHOLE LOT SAFER THAN THE "SANCT-VARRY" AT THAT MOMENT)
(WELL..)
TALK ABOUT YOUR "VOID OF TRUTH"
BEFORE YOU COULD SAY STRATEGO-TACTICAL RETRENCHMENT..
(WELL-- NOT BEFORE YOU COULD SAY IT.
HEH-HEH
YOU WEREN'T THERE.)
EH. BEFORE CERBERUS COULD SAY IT. WE WERE "HOTFELING ACROSST" THE WESTERN PLAINS...
...CERBERUS IN A PILLOW-LINED TWO WHEELED CART PRAWN BY MOSHER'S HORSE, HANGING ON FOR DEAR LIFE...
(THAT IS... CERBERUS WAS HANGING ON FOR DEAR LIFE)
(NOT MOSHER'S HORSE)

ALTHOUGH CERBERUS SPENT MOST OF THE TRIP WATCHING OUT FOR
BUMP!
IN ORDER TO KEEP HIS BROKEN LEG FROM GETTING ANY BROKENER...
EVEN IN MID-AIR CERBERUS COULDN'T HELP BUT NOTICE HOW DESOLATE THE WESTERN PLAINS HAD BECOME -- NOT EVEN A BLADE OF GRASS FOR MILES AROUND

JUST AS CEREBELLO COULDN'T HELP BUT NOTICE EVEN IN MID-AIR A FEW MILES AFTER A CIRINIST WITH HER HEAD BLOWN OFF AND HALF HER CHEST SHOT AWAY...

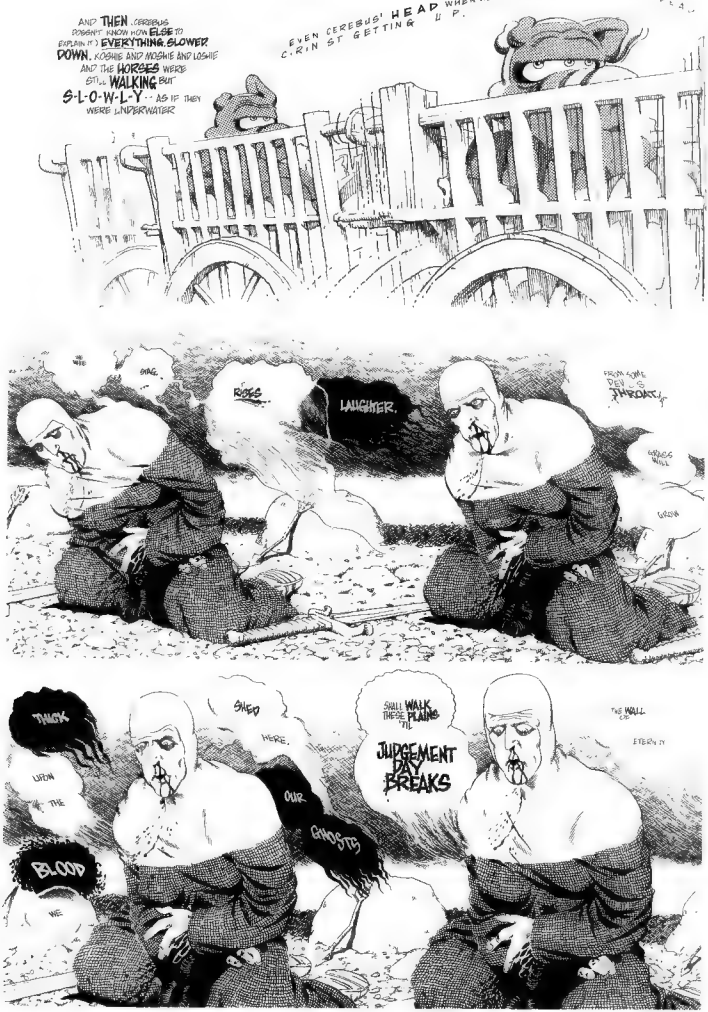
...OR, THAT IS, CEREBELLO WAS IN MID-AIR. THE CIRINIST WAS LYING ON THE GROUND.

...AND A FEW MILES AFTER THAT...

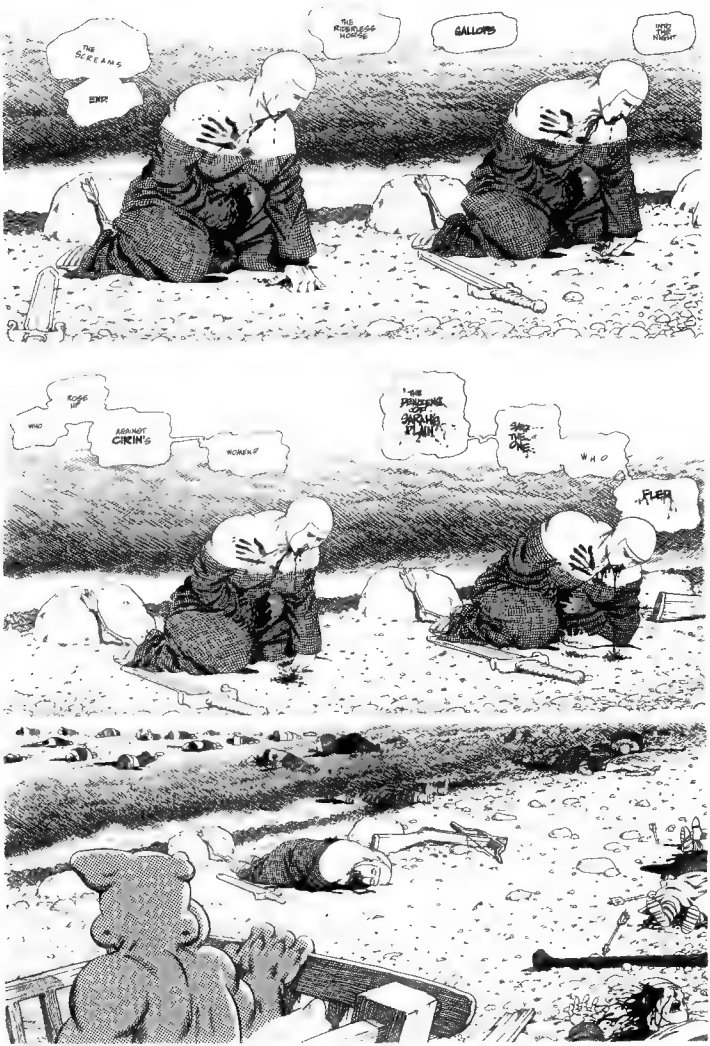
...A COUPLE MORE DEAD CIRINISTS.

AND A FEW MILES AFTER THAT, SO MANY DEAD CIRINISTS

THAT MOSHIE, LOSHIE AND KOSHIE HAD TO DISMOUNT AND WALK THE HORSES THROUGH THE MAZE OF CIRINIST CORPSES!

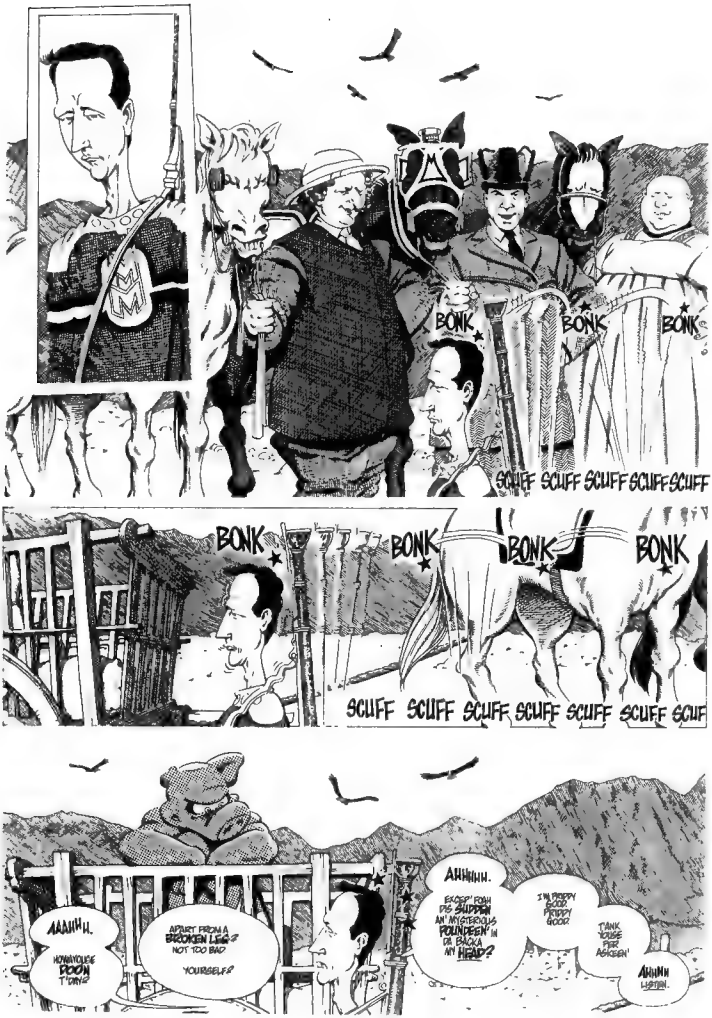

AND THEN, CERBERUS DOESN'T KNOW HOW ELSE TO EXPLAIN IT, EVERYTHING SLOWER DOWN. KOSHIE AND MOSHIE AND LOSHIE AND THE HORSES WERE STILL WALKING BUT S-L-O-W-L-Y... AS IF THEY WERE UNDERWATER
EVEN CERBERUS' HEAD WHEN HE TURNED TO WATCH THE D
C-RIN ST GETTING UP.
GNG.
ROSS
LAUGHTER.
FROM A WHITE DEVIL'S THROAT.
GRRRG WHITE
GRRRG
THICK
GHOSTS
SHED
HERE.
OUR
BLOOD
ME
SHALL WALK THESE PLAINS 'TIL
JUDGEMENT DAY BREAKS
THE WALL
ETERNITY

CHOOSE!
THE ANGELS OF WAR SOUND THEIR CRY.
BLIND
DAWN SPILLS BLOOD UPON THE
THE SCARRED STRUGGLE
IN THE TRADITIONAL MANNER
A NIGHTINGALE LAUGHS.
THE PAIN BRINGS RING.
AND IT BEGINS.
MCAGHER? VANISHED? NAY! LOOK! SHE HANGS FROM THE ELDER TREE
MRS. HANNAH
EVERY TIME I HEAR HER SCREAMING AS IF
MY WIFE, MAGGOTS OF HELL WERE FEASTING
OH HER GUTS
HOLD YOUR COURAGE, BRAVE MOTHERS
THE PLAINS VOMIT FORTH
THEIR
VILE
PENITENTS


THE SCREAMS
END
THE RIDERLESS HORSE
GALLOPS
INTO THE NIGHT
ROSE UP
WHO
AGAINST CIKIN'S
WOMEN?
THE PEACEFUL USE OF SMOKING PLAIN
SHOT THE ONE
WHO
FLEW

A PLACE OF DIRE WOE AND FORBODING! HERE WAS CAUGHILUS THE SEPRAN DEFEATED BY THE PICTS...
SUFFERING A NEAR FATAL WOUND...
...WHICH HE DIDST SURVIVE...
ONLY TO HAVE HIS SHIP SINKETH OFF BEINWICK KILLING ALL HANDS ABOARD!
CHEE, MOSH YOU SMOOSH! KNOW A LOTTA HIST'RY!
UHHHH...
ALL OF THESE CORPSES.
AYE? *THY EXTREME LOPTIMISM.*
THEY'RE ALL CHINISTS
AYE! *THY EXALTED ELEVATEDNESS.*
NONE OF THEM ARE CEREBITES.
NAY. *THY UPPERMOSTEDNESS.*
SO?
'SO?' *THY OVERCHEESE'D HEADSE*
'SO.' WHAT'S THE BIG 'CAPOSTROPHE?
DA BIG CAPOSTROPHE IS COMIN' DIS WAY. YOOAH SUPREME AVENGEANCENESS
AN HIS NAME IS
(SAW NEER)
TODD "FAR LANE" McSPAHN!

KRUNCH!?
LUNCH!?
MUNCH!?
TELL 'IM, TODDY "FAIR LANE" MCSPAHN! TELL PA ONE (WHOSE WISDOM AN' UNNERSTANEEN SOYPASSET OLE) HOW YOU DISOBEYED A DIRECT ORDER
TELL 'IM!
HOWA 'OUSE BOWE SOON T'DAY?
ROWE
ROWE
QUIET, AIREDALE. DESIREST THOU THAT MOSHER SHOULDST PUT A MUZZLE ON THEE?
SERIOUSLY...
DIS IS HIM?
ON YOOAH KNEES!
SOUT' WESTRIN EXPATRY-ROTTED INSUFFERTONATIONAL SCUMMY-SCUM-SCUM
NYUK NYUK NYUK


MMM
BONK
BONK
BONK
SCUFF SCUFF SCUFF SCUFF SCUFF
BONK
BONK
BONK
BONK
SCUFF SCUFF SCUFF SCUFF SCUFF SCUFF SCUF
AAHHH.
HOWAYOUSE DOON T'DAY?
APART FROM A BROKEN LEG? NOT TOO BAD
YOURSELF?
AHHHH.
EXCEPT FOR DE SKUPPEN AN' MYSTERIOUS POUNDEEN' IN DE BACKA MY HEAD?
I'M PRETTY GOOD, PRUDY GOOD!
TANK YOUSE FER ASKEEN!
AHHHH LISTEN.

ON DA ONE HAND WHILST IT IS TRUE DAT I AM DA NUTTIEST FRUITCAKE ON DA PASTRY WAGON...
(HAWL-STOPPOLYE MY THEORY IS, LETS TRY DA CRAZIEST TING WE CN THINK UP ROAST...
...AN' IF'N DAT DON'T WORK BEN WE WILL TRY --AS A LAST RESTORT-- SOMETEEN WHAT MAKES SENSE)
...ON DA LIDDAH HAND I AM ALTSO FULLY COGNIZANT OF DA FACT DAT I AM DA NUTTIEST FRUITCAKE ON DA PASTRY WAGON!
Y UNNERSTAN' IF
UH-HUH
NOW.
ON DA THOIRD HAND:
WHEN DA McSPAHN FAMBLY JOOLS FOUND THEYSELFS ON DA CHOPPEEN BLOCK I AM ALTSO
(IBSO FATSO)
DA SANEST PEANUT YOUSE ARE APT TO FOIND HATCHEEN' FORT' POD-LOIK.. FRUM DA PISTILLATE FLOWERS UPON DA HOYBACEOUS VOINE.
Y UNNERSTAN'S
UH HUH
SO, IF'N SUMBLODDY TRIES TA TELL ME (LIKE HICK'RY, DICK'RY AN' DOC OWL+ DEBBE TREE) TA TELL ME) TA STAND OUT IN DA MIDDLE OF A BIG FIELD AN' JOOSE WAIT FER A NUMEROLOGICLY SUPERIOR FORCE TO ENCOITCKLE ME.. WELL DA CONSTITUTIONUS NOSEBAWS BOUNCEEN' BABY BOY TODDY TINKS TO HISSELF IS "SUPPLY LINE"
Y UNNERSTAN' IF
UH HUH

ON DA FOATH HAND, STAYVEEN OUTTA 'SOILY GUN RANGE'
DAT WUZ A SPOKE O' BRILLIANCE - BUT ONLY IF OUR GUNS WAS SIGHED IN PUNCH A HOLE IN DA CIRINIST LINES INNA SOUTH...
..WHERE DEYRE SUPPLY LINE IS
OR WUZ.
AN' DEN HOYD 'EM WEST AN' HOYD 'EM EAST UNTIL DEY WITS DA MOUNTAINS AN DA CANYONS RIGHTEOUSLY
Y'UNNERSTAN'?
AT WHICH POINT DA WHOLE TING BECAME JUST TWO BIG TOKEY SHOOTS. KA-BOOM, KA-BOOM
UH-HUH
WELL, EXCEP' FER DA NORTH. BUT DA CIRINIST'S AIN'T GOT NO FRIENDS INNA NORTH
SO, (OR WAY I FIGGER IT) DA BOYS INNA NORTH CAN HUNT 'EM DOWN IN ONESIES AND TWOSIES ...
WHILST WE IS WAITIN' FOR DA BIG COUNTER-ATTACK FRUM DA SOUTH.
Y'UNNERSTAN'?
UH-HUH
WELL, OKEY-DOKE!! DAT IS WAY I DISCRIBED YOUM DI-RECT ORDER AN (DERBY) GOT FLOPPSY, MOPPSY AN' COTTONTAIL'S UNDAWEAR INA BIG. KNOT.
MOPPSY!
-ER, THAT IS
MOSHER!
SNAP SNAP

YES. THY MERCILESSNESS!
AS CEREBUS FIRST TRY THE FAITH OF THE PROPHET RICK AFORETIMES, EVEN SO HATH TODD 'FAR LANE' McSPAWN BEEN TESTED IN HIS FAITH, AND IN HIS UNDERSTANDING AND WITH PROVED HIMSELF.
BY DISOBEYING THE ORDER WHICH WAST SPOKEN UNTO HIM, BY CEREBUS' DEMON SELF.
THEREFORE HEARKEN UNTO TODD 'FAR LANE' McSPAWN, THOU THOSE WHO FELLOWS, IN ALL THAT PERTAINEST UNTO THE WAR AGAINST THE CIRINISTS
THAT HE MIGHT ABOLISTETH US IN BRINGING AN END TO THIS AGE WHICH HATH OVERTURNED ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS ... AFTER THE MANNER OF THE DEVIL, THE VIPER, AND THE SCORPION.
AMEN.
AMEN.
AMEN.
AMEN.
ANY QUESTIONS?
AHHHHH. YEAH
WADDAYAWANT WE SHOULD DO WID ALLA DESE CORPSES?
MAKE ONE BIG PILE...
LET 'EM ROT DOWN TO THEIR SKELETONS..
...LET THE SUN BLEACH THE SKELETONS WHITE...
...BUILD A PARK AROUND 'EM AND...
...TOIN DA WHOLE T'ING INTO A TOURIST ATTRACTION? JUST TO MAKE A POINT?
EXACTLY
UH-HUH
UH-HUH
UH-HUH

HEY! AN' A PONY RIDE AROUN' DA BONES?
MY LITTLE GOIL LOVES PONY RIDES
AAAAIIII
SAY! IZZIT OKAY WITCHYOU DAT I DON'T RUFF N TUFFIZUM BACK HURTS HERE IN MY KNEES ?
DESE HERE IS MY GOOD POINTS
HUHH?
OH!
STANDEST THOU UPRIGHT, THY FAITH HATH MADE THEE VERTICAL!
T'ANK YOUSE,
MMMM
GRUMPH
YOUSE POYCE HIM SELUF A NICE DAY
YOUSE

Is Dave Brady *Actually* Gay?

(As I mentioned last issue, this was the conclusion to the review of *Cerebus: Going Homo* that I was working on in the days leading up to 11 September. I've decided to print much of the rough draught here to remind myself of just how degraded the world had become—before 11 September, 2001—that I thought there was any value whatsoever in addressing Dave Brady's ridiculous speculations)

Well.

When in Rome...

If the feminist-homosexualist axis is unable to raise its perceptions from the gutter (and that seems, clearly, to be the case), far be it from me to insist that this final exchange of views take place on a more exalted level than my own groin.

About my sexuality:

My decision to practice celibacy (three-and-a-half years and counting) can be attributed to my complete uncertainty about God's View of fornication (major sin or minor sin? Or sin at all?). My best current thinking is that it is the act of pursuit *and* the intrinsic dishonesty of seduction *which is the more corrupt and corrupting element than the sex act itself. As a college football coach once said: he has no problem with his players having sex the night before a game—what he does have a problem with is his players staying up until four in the morning* looking *for it and then talking their intended prey* into *it. As a man (goes my best current thinking), you degrade your soul by devoting excess attention, time and other spiritual and material resources to sexual matters. Aside from debasing your own best nature, it (reciprocally) elevates a Monica Lewinsky or a Chandra Levy above their place. That is, in direct proportion to the amount of attention paid to a Lewinsky or a Levy, you Debase your President when you Elevate your Intern (so to speak).*

The feminist-homosexualist view—emotion-based as it is—holds the exact opposite to be true. A lover/girlfriend/wife is *the sole useful presence in a man's life, beside which all else is just varying degrees of useless. Your job, as a man, has value insofar as it pays you enough money to buy her presents, to take her out for dinner, to go on vacations and to jointly pay for the new dining room set or sofa. So long as your job doesn't intrude upon your lover/girlfriend/wife's pre-eminent claim on your time, money and attention, then your job is good. If it* does *intrude, then your job is bad. And you are a workaholic. Which is bad. Instead of a wifeaholic. Which is good.*

This all originates—goes my best current thinking—with the après *coitus question of, "Now what?" If your sole motivation is the act of fornication—as mine invariably was—it's just a matter of* when—*not* if—*you turn into a pig.*

"That was great. Have a wonderful life."

Pig.

"That was great. I'll call you."

Lying Pig.

"That was great. I'll call you tonight."

Call her that night.

"I'll see you again soon."

Lying Pig.

"Let's go see a movie on Friday."

Go see a movie on Friday.

"I'll call you."

Lying Pig.

"I'll call you when I get home."

Call her when I get home.

"I'll see you soon."

Lying Pig.

"Why don't you come over tomorrow night after work?"

She comes over tomorrow night.

In other words, as long as each one of my choices after I have sex with her *establishes, step-by-step, her incremental pre-eminent claim on my time and attention, then I'm not a pig. Anything* else *and I* am *a pig. Of course, in order not to be a pig, you end up married. Seeing her every other night or twice a week for two years in order to not be called a pig only postpones the inevitable.*

"Sob. This relationship Just Isn't GOING Anywhere."

"Are we still on for Friday?"

Pig.

In my view, capitulating to that worldview—"make me the centre of your life or you're a pig"—is, to say the least, ethically suspect and spiritually wrong-headed. When I first realized, sometime in 1997, that the only sensible ethical centre in anyone's life (or in mine, *anyway) is God, I became aware that this put God on a*

collision course with my then-girlfriend. The other way around, of course—but in either case she didn't stand a chance.

A big part of being a woman (from my experiences with them) is seeing how big a part of your significant other's life you can make yourself. Girlfriend Events (in my experience) invariably conflict with everything else that you consider important. Otherwise, you know, where's the fun for her? Competing for your time and attention—and winning*—is the equivalent in a woman's life of professional sports in a man's life. Is she ahead of her nearest rival? Did your most recent Serious Discussion end in a win, a loss or a tie? What's her record in the past 10 Serious Discussions she has had with you (home and road games)? 7-2-1?* (High Fives all around from her girlfriends)(particularly if her girlfriends have gone 3-6-1 in the same period with *their* boyfriends). *I was not especially appalled by this, back in my "girlfriend days". It was part of the game, part of the price of sex. I wasn't going to get to watch as much hockey or baseball as I wanted to. If I was going to miss a game, I could pretty much count on it being a key playoff match-up. Don't most wedding receptions take place against a backdrop of one or two scrupulously single guys shuttling back and forth between the television in the hotel bar and the ballroom, updating the score for all the wives' prop husbands (who are pretending to be entranced by "Color my World")? At some point, it was time to put down the* New Yorker *or the* Atlantic Monthly *and go look at antiques ("*Distressed *wood? This table doesn't even look particularly* anxious*. OW!") I brought just that level of amusement and good-natured fun to each of my relationships, knowing that each of my relationships was temporary. She wants to be more important to me than the Leafs, the Blue Jays, whatever article I'm reading or whatever article I'm writing. Isn't that cute?*

My sudden and newfound faith in God was a different thing entirely. Particularly when I decided to observe a Sabbath in which I read the Bible, the Koran and commentaries and (variously) went to church, prayed and fasted. Unless I was visiting my girlfriend, in which case I would spend Sunday drinking white wine, reading the papers, watching videos and/or television and having sex. How devout is that*? As I say, a collision course. When I* did *break off the relationship, I recognized that I was not—to say the least—in the catbird seat for any* future *relationship. "You spend EVERY Sunday by yourself, reading the Bible and the Koran and praying? What am I supposed to do EVERY Sunday?" You can't do that in a relationship with a woman—essentially tell her that she has already lost all of her home AND away games that take place between midnight Saturday and midnight Sunday. I mean, you* could*, I suppose, but what you would have to "trade off" is just too terrible to even speculate on. You'd probably have to propose on the third date. I know this doesn't sound to* YOU *as if I am discussing my sexuality (you ol' secular-humanist you), but I definitely am. In fact, my faith in God is the central consideration in discussing my sexuality.*

It was a lucky thing for me (or I consider that to be the case) that I'm not particularly needy in the companionship department. And I believe that that is the case with an increasing percentage of the population (the statistic that I read indicated that 28% of the people in North America live alone: in 1940 that figure was 8%), even though it is not popularly believed to be the case. "Somewhere out there, there's a certain someone for everyone." In that case, someone can have mine and their own as well and no thanks necessary. The pleasure is all mine, I assure you. Ancillary to this (in discussing my sexuality)(and more germane to the present "hedgehoggery") is the implication of the feminist-homosexualist axis' universally held view (universally by everyone except me, that is) that the genders are interchangeable. If I get involved with a woman and she believes (as I believe all *women do at this point in our history) that that is so, then, for all intents and purposes I am involved in a gay relationship. The only dichotomous nuances allowed for are that she thinks we are a) both lesbians or she thinks that we're b) both gays. Not being at all gay, I tried to overlook this (in the interests of getting laid and for the sake of female companionship which—while overrated, in my view, by all men including myself—is still a thing of not inconsiderable value). Ultimately, however, overlooking that intrinsic female view seemed to imply denial or, rather, Denial on my part of a self-evident reality: particularly since women's conversation, in my experience—and nowhere moreso than in a romantic relationship (once you are past the politeness of the "court 'n' spark" phase)—centres almost exclusively on her need to break down and eliminate all distinctions between the genders and to get men to go along with it.*

Capitulating to that viewpoint of gender interchangeability (might as well say it straight out) seems really, well, gay to me. To reiterate, I don't deny for a minute any husband's perfect right to enter into the interchangeably-gendered relationship of his choice with the interchangeably-gendered partner of his choice (and to use the interchangeably-gendered terminology invented by homosexualists—"partner" and "significant other" instead of "wife" and "husband") and to cohabit with a being who sees...

(insert interchangeable pronoun-prefix here) (herm?)

*...*hermself *as indistinguishable in all particulars from men, lesbians, gays, transsexuals and transvestites. But, I do find it somewhat ironic that the one person in the world I know of who has resisted being subsumed within that interchangeably-gendered grey societal pudding (in no small part because it* has *become so resolutely* gay *in its nature)—that is to say,* me*—is now being accused of being a homosexual.*

Talk about a "rock and a hard place Catch-22": enter into an interchangeably-gendered-gay-patterned-lifelong-commitment-with-an-interchangeably-gendered partner or we'll accuse you of being gay.

Clearly, the collective "serpent brain" of the feminist-homosexualist axis is a "one-trick pony" and a "one-track mind" as "brains" go.

With all this talk about the ubiquity of marital infidelity, isn't it worth considering that more husbands are cheating on their wives because they seek feminine *partners for sex? That is, that all this interchangeably-gendered-significant-other-reciprocal-tweedledum-tweedledee-gay-patterned-life-partnering-voodoo-profession-penile-challenged-is-the-same-as-penis-equipped-grey-societal-pudding stuff is fine for public consumption, looks good on the husbandly résumé and the family Christmas cards and so on. But, to put a little "starch in his noodle" there is just no replacement for "A Scent of a Woman," "Thank Heaven for Little Girls," "Vive la Différence" "Yavavavvoom" FEMININE woman? (of course, as I came to realize, the FEMININE thing is just a portrayal. Invariably, she is going to believe, as well, that everyone is interchangeably-gendered. But, in the interests of poaching on someone else's interchangeably-gendered preserve (as it were) she recognizes the need to pretend to a level of femininity long-abandoned ("let's cut the crap, okay?") by the present custodian of the joint bank account, the diamond ring and one leg of the family pants—whose interchangeably-gendered-but-penile-equipped asset she is trying to appropriate.* [What I was leading up to with this particular train of thought: This is the reason that I'm not susceptible to the young women I'm ogling at the club every Friday night. Even though only a miniscule percentage of them—even at age 20!—*appear* feminine, I know that that femininity, in the context of our current, degraded feminist age, is just a portrayal. It is worth it—to me—to stay up late on Friday just to *see* the façade of that endangered species, femininity. And I hope that the granddaughters, the great-granddaughters or the great-great-great-granddaughters of the girls that I am ogling will, one day, actually *be* feminine again but I have long ago accepted the fact that no actually feminine women exist in this world and are unlikely to exist in this world during my lifetime. There is a great relief in that. I know I'm not missing anything and I can appreciate the handful of aesthetically pleasing young women on a purely aesthetic level: femininity's last outpost (as it were) in the 21st century. I'm happy to leave them to form their romantic attachments with those fellows who are happy to be seen—and to see *themselves*—(unlike myself) as interchangeably-gendered]

Of course it's worth considering. Will it be *considered? Of course not. Why? Because the interchangeably-gendered feminist-homosexualist axis which exclusively controls all forms of communication in our society holds as self-evident the view that all problems in our society are solely the fault of heterosexual men. Mrs. Condit can't be the problem. Nor can Chandra Levy be the problem. It has to be the Congressman from Modesto. Why? Because he's a man and he's sexually interested in feminine women. Hanging, therefore, is too good for him.*

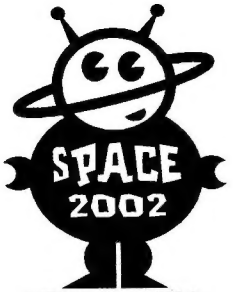
****

And that was as far as I had gotten when the events of 11 September took place. It seems to me fundamental to our society that—literally—an act of war is required to shuffle the feminist-homosexualist axis back into the distant background of our society where it belongs. Temporarily, no doubt. Although they never have anything meaningful to say, they are never quiet for very long. Prior to 11 September, it seemed rather broad-minded of me to attempt some kind of dialogue. But—even before *Reading Cerebus* arrived in the mail—it was apparent to me that there was no coherent opposing viewpoint to debate. Like the Anti-Poverty protestors who, within weeks of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, had come to Toronto from Quebec (where else?), turning over newspaper boxes, defecating in the streets and defacing—and attempting to burn—the American flag which flies in front of the Royal York Hotel (a Toronto landmark). Appalling, but also strangely gratifying. Gratifying in the same…self-revelatory…way in which it was gratifying to see the Palestinian Authority reject Ehud Barak's offer to cede the West Bank and Gaza and much of Jerusalem to Palestinian control. Because at that point, the civilized world could recognize *what sort of sub-humans we are dealing with here.*

Does "sub-human" overstate the case?

I don't think so. I think we really separated the men from the boys and the humans from the sub-humans in the aftermath of the events of 11 September. Can anyone imagine Susan Sontag (just to cite one example) ever again being paid attention to by any thinking, *civilized* person after her *New Yorker* piece in the memorial issue of that publication? Of course there are political disagreements across the spectrum, but it is only the terminally insensitive, the terminally self-absorbed, who fail to recognize in the face of a Monumental Tragedy that Now Is Not the Time: who fail to recognize that there are Moments in Time which entirely supersede, "Well, you know what *I think*?" Where the mere fact that they find it not only *allowable*, but *necessary*, to tread all over just such a Moment and to infect it with their own disproportionate sense of self implies (it seems to me) that not only do they *not think* (in any meaningful sense of the term), they are not even capable of *a level of awareness* outside of their own self-absorbed and—yes—sub-human little perceptions. I think it appropriate now—months later—to point out the irony that many members of the feminist-homosexualist axis—who have effectively voted everyone *else* off *their* island in the last several years—are now finding themselves faced with the same situation: having either to pay lip service to a viewpoint they do not share (the new global consensus—shared by all civilized people—that you are either on the side of civilization or you are on the side of the terrorists) or to be ostracized from polite society. I did not think it appropriate for issue 271, 272 or 273.

Having gotten rid of my television early in August, I have had more than my usual amount of "thinking time" on the various issues that have assumed greater prominence since the events of 11 September: thoughts that I look forward to getting down on paper in the next few months in this space. Beginning in issue 276—God willing—(as I begin my third annual fast in the sacred month of Ramadan) with a series of essays entitled "Islam, My Islam".



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